United Nations A/59/130

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 July 2004
English
Original: Arabic/English/French/
Spanish

Fifty-ninth session
Item 72 of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region

Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–2	2
II.	Replies received from States	3–36	2
	A. Jordan	3–4	2
	B. Lebanon	5–9	3
	C. Mexico	10–11	4
	D. Morocco	12–30	4
	E. Panama	31–35	6
	F. Venezuela	36	7

* A/59/50 and Corr.1.

04-41830 (E) 020804

I. Introduction

1. On 8 December 2003, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 58/70, entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", by which, inter alia, it called upon all States of the Mediterranean region that had not yet done so to adhere to all the multilaterally negotiated legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, thus creating the necessary conditions for strengthening peace and cooperation in the region, and encouraged all States of the region to favour the necessary conditions for strengthening the confidence-building measures among them by promoting genuine openness and transparency on all military matters, by participating, inter alia, in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures and by providing accurate data and information to the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms. The Assembly also encouraged the Mediterranean countries to strengthen further their cooperation in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, taking into account the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and in combating international crime and illicit arms transfers and illicit drug production, consumption and trafficking, which pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the region and therefore to the improvement of the current political, economic and social situation and which jeopardize friendly relations among States, hinder the development of international cooperation and result in the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the democratic basis of pluralistic society. Furthermore, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on means to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

2. In this connection, a note verbale dated 18 February 2004 was sent to States and relevant intergovernmental organizations. The replies received are reproduced in section II below. Any replies received subsequently will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from States

A. Jordan

[Original: English]
[10 May 2004]

3. The Mission wishes to reiterate that Jordan's policy on the subject matter in question is one that underscores the importance of calling for the consistent consolidation and strengthening of confidence-building measures and emphasizing the need to solidify and further strengthen peace and security on both the regional and international levels. Jordan places special importance on creating a weapons of mass destruction-free zone in the Middle East and has signed all relevant international instruments concerning arms control and non-proliferation.

4. Additionally, Jordan has been actively participating in a broad range of conferences and workshops aimed at devising effective means and measures to curb terrorism and bring terrorists to justice and combat illicit trading and trafficking in weapons and drugs. The General Headquarters of the Jordanian Armed Forces regularly, and on an annual basis, submits a transparent report detailing all facets of

its military expenditure and its full inventory of weapons and armament to the relevant United Nations organs.

B. Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[25 May 2004]

5. Regarding the request that all the States of the Middle East region become parties to all multilateral legal instruments on disarmament, Lebanon has signed or ratified a number of those instruments, the most important of which are:

(a) The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed by Lebanon on 1 July 1968 and ratified on 15 July 1970;

(b) The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, signed by Lebanon on 10 April 1972 and ratified on 26 March 1975;

(c) The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, signed by Lebanon on 18 May 1977 and not yet ratified.

6. Lebanon is committed to a policy of maintaining international peace and security. For that reason, it undertook to ratify the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1970 and has ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. Lebanon believes in the need to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and in the illegality of the threat of use of such weapons. Strengthening security in the Middle East region requires efforts by all parties concerned. However, it is a known fact that Israel is the sole nuclear-weapon State in the Middle East and is recognized by the United Nations as possessing nuclear warheads, yet refuses to allow monitoring of its nuclear arsenal by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

7. Regarding counter-terrorism, Lebanon has taken a firm stand against terrorism in all its forms, including State terrorism, and fully supports Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). Lebanon has submitted its third report to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to that resolution, concerning counter-terrorism, and is currently preparing its fourth report.

8. Lebanon has acceded to 10 international conventions on terrorism and is at present studying the possibility of acceding to the two conventions to which it is not yet a party, namely:

(a) The International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (12 January 1998);

(b) The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (9 December 1999).

9. Lebanon believes that the exercise of the right of peoples to resist occupation with a view to self-determination in accordance with the four Geneva Conventions does not constitute terrorism. It also believes that the killing of innocent civilians by

the authorities of an occupying State constitutes an act of State terrorism and is to be condemned.

C. Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[6 May 2004]

10. Mexico reaffirms that security in the Mediterranean region is closely linked to security in Europe and to international peace and security. In that context, it urges States in the Mediterranean region to promote developments in the area of political cooperation and security that will favour the strengthening of the peace process and emphasizes that the Barcelona Declaration, adopted in 1995 as the basis for the Euro-Mediterranean process, designated political cooperation and security as one of the three pillars of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

11. Mexico echoes the call, contained in paragraph 5 of resolution 58/70, to the effect that all States of the Mediterranean region that have not yet done so should adhere to all the multilaterally negotiated legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, thus creating the necessary conditions for strengthening peace and cooperation in the region. It calls on those States to step up their efforts to reach an agreement that will ensure peace and stability in the region.

D. Morocco

[Original: French]
[7 May 2004]

12. Morocco has always believed that peace, stability and security in the Mediterranean should be a strategic objective to be achieved and a common good to be promoted and strengthened.

13. The Mediterranean faces security challenges which are as varied as they are numerous. In addition to often chronic conflicts, whether open or latent, and the heightened effects of certain global social phenomena, the Mediterranean is feeling the full effects of new, widespread and violent threats, such as terrorism. Those challenges are not of course specific to the region but, when combined with other regional factors, they are exacerbated and take on added importance.

14. More specifically, the development gaps between an integrated and prosperous Europe and a southern flank, which is still developing, highlight the social and economic problems facing the two sides. The economic disparities between the two sides of the Mediterranean speak volumes: annual per capita income is $20,000 in the European Union countries but only $2,000 in the Maghreb and the Middle East. That economic gap between North and South in the Mediterranean region gives rise to and accentuates such troubling phenomena as illicit trafficking and illegal migration, a situation which fuels tensions in the Mediterranean subregions.

15. International terrorism has unquestionably acquired a global dimension. That phenomenon has not spared the Mediterranean, as evidenced by the attacks in Djerba, Casablanca, Istanbul and Madrid. The fight against this insidious and unpredictable threat which has challenged the world order requires collaborative

efforts through a comprehensive and concerted approach to eradicating its various root causes and manifestations.

16. The lack of progress towards disarmament at the international and regional levels, together with the refusal of some countries to accede to multilateral non-proliferation conventions, has the potential to affect the climate of confidence and exacerbate the arms race in the region.

17. Moreover, the protracted crises which have become almost chronic cannot help but affect security in the region. In that regard, the Middle East conflict continues to escalate, in spite of initiatives on the part of the international community and mediation efforts; it poses a serious threat to the Mediterranean identity and is a powder keg which threatens the stability of the Mediterranean.

18. Other challenges of an environmental nature, such as water shortages and excessive demand on water resources in many areas of the Mediterranean, could increase tension in the region.

19. Given the growing challenges to peace and security in the Mediterranean and the benefits derived from a policy of openness founded on dialogue, shared management of regional issues and acts of solidarity, Morocco has, since the end of the 1980s, contributed to various initiatives aimed at the promotion of real cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

20. In that context, Morocco's cooperation with the Mediterranean countries has been a singularly positive one, because the Kingdom prepared the way for or initiated a number of measures aimed at restructuring the Mediterranean strategic space and strengthening dialogue and cooperation between the two sides. Morocco has always sought to enrich the conceptual framework of Euro-Mediterranean relations, adapt their institutional mechanisms and improve the operational effectiveness of Mediterranean regional consultation and cooperation structures.

21. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona process) in particular, which is the most comprehensive and multidimensional initiative in that it deals with security in the Mediterranean in its various economic, political, cultural and social dimensions, is a fine example of such efforts.

22. The regional framework is complemented by profuse and varied bilateral relationships between Morocco and the European Union. The longstanding, dense, robust and multidimensional nature of relations between Morocco and Europe has led the two parties to give their relations the advanced integration status requested by Morocco, which is perfectly in keeping with the European Union's new European Neighbourhood policy.

23. The Mediterranean Forum, the 5+5 Dialogue and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation initiative reinforce and complement in a useful and relevant manner the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

24. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Mediterranean Dialogue, in which Morocco has participated since it was launched in 1994, provides an important framework for political consultation, a satisfactory tool for practical cooperation and an essential conduit for information exchange. Morocco has also contributed to the Alliance's efforts to stabilize the Balkans in the context of the Kosovo Force

(KFOR) and the Stabilization Force (SFOR) missions, in which the Kingdom is participating pursuant to United Nations resolutions.

25. Thanks to the growing number of cooperation and consultation mechanisms established with a view to promoting cooperation for security in the Mediterranean, there is a true sense of shared purpose, which should be accompanied by efforts to make optimal use of resources and methods. Although the existence of such structures makes a positive contribution to regional security, their actions must be coordinated in order to avoid duplication and to develop synergies capable of reinforcing stability in the Mediterranean.

26. Furthermore, the key to the establishment of a Mediterranean regional order founded on a truly balanced partnership is improving the sense of ownership of the countries on the southern shore with regard to those various structures and initiatives.

27. Morocco has always believed that the shared nature of security requires the adoption of a comprehensive and concerted approach capable of ensuring peace and security in the region and of transforming it into a region of mutual prosperity, based on active cooperation and joint responsibility between Europe and the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

28. The concept of the indivisibility of security now calls for the circle of Euro-Mediterranean solidarity to be widened to include other neighbouring regions, particularly Africa.

29. The Kingdom of Morocco believes that the closing of the social and economic development gap and the establishment of confidence-building measures between the countries of the region should serve as a catalyst for the emergence of a stable and prosperous regional order which will progress from security based solely on the concept of vigilance towards truly integrated security for the benefit of all the peoples of the region.

30. It nevertheless remains true that only real political will on the part of the States of the region can contribute to overcoming the stereotype of the Mediterranean as an area of crisis and restore it to its original role as a zone of peace and economic, human and cultural exchanges.

E. Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[24 May 2004]

31. The following information was provided by the Council for Public Security and National Defence of the Office of the President of the Republic of Panama.

32. The Republic of Panama supports any initiative, whether bilateral or multilateral, that would provide greater guarantees against threats to international peace and security and would therefore contribute to enhancing peace and cooperation in the region.

33. In this connection, Panama deems it important to favour the necessary conditions for strengthening mutual confidence-building measures among States. In

particular, it believes that participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms would contribute to stability in the region.

34. Lastly, Panama believes that the Mediterranean countries should be encouraged to continue their cooperation in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and in combating international crime, illicit arms trafficking and illicit drug production, consumption and trafficking, which diminish the quality of life of their peoples and pose a serious threat to peace and stability in the region. To this end, the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, as well as various multilateral agreements in a number of fields must be taken into account.

35. The Republic of Panama is convinced that such measures will build confidence and reduce the perceived threat in the region. It therefore looks forward to the achievement of significant progress on issues underlying the conflict itself, as well as better communication among countries traditionally thought to be adversaries.

F. Venezuela

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2004]

36. The Government of Venezuela considers paragraphs 5 to 8 of the said resolution to be in conformity with its traditional approach to foreign policy in that they reaffirm the national ideal of peace and security as global values and are in keeping with the international instruments negotiated under the United Nations multilateral system, designed to create a lawful and reliable framework for action.

A/59/131

Readex
Fiche

United Nations A/59/131

General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 July 2004

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session
Item 16 of the preliminary list*
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

Election of seven members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976 and General Assembly decision 42/450 of 17 December 1987, the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination are nominated by the Economic and Social Council and elected by the General Assembly.

2. The membership of the Committee in 2004 is as follows:

Argentina,** Armenia,** Bahamas,*** Benin,** Brazil,** Canada,** Central African Republic,** China,* Comoros,*** Cuba,** Ethiopia,* France,*** Gabon,** Germany,** India,** Indonesia,** Iran (Islamic Republic of),** Japan,* Mexico,*** Monaco,** Nicaragua,** Nigeria,* Pakistan,** Republic of Korea,* Republic of Moldova,** Russian Federation,*** South Africa,** Switzerland,** Tunisia,* Ukraine,** United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,** United States of America,*** Uruguay* and Zimbabwe.***

* Term of office expires on 31 December 2004.

** Term of office expires on 31 December 2005.

*** Term of office expires on 31 December 2006.

3. The General Assembly, at its fifty-ninth session, will be called upon to elect seven members, on the nomination of the Economic and Social Council, to fill the vacancies in the Committee that will occur on 31 December 2004 upon the expiration of the terms of office of the following members: China, Ethiopia, Japan, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Tunisia and Uruguay.

* A/59/50 and Corr.1.

04-41585 (E) 190704

4. In accordance with General Assembly decision 42/450, the vacancies are to be filled as follows:

(a) Three members from African States;

(b) Three members from Asian States;

(c) One member from Latin American and Caribbean States.

5. By its decisions 2004/201 C of 4 May 2004 and 2004/201 D of 23 June 2004, the Economic and Social Council nominated the following Member States for election by the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session for a term of three years beginning on 1 January 2005: Algeria, China, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya and Republic of Korea. The geographical distribution of the nominated Member States is as follows:

(a) African States (three vacancies): Algeria, Ghana, Kenya;

(b) Asian States (three vacancies): China, Japan, Republic of Korea;

(c) Latin American and Caribbean States (one vacancy): Jamaica.